



WATCHET CONSERVATION MATTERS

For conserving our built and natural environment

Issue 11

July 2010

Introduction from our Chair, Molly Quint

Dear Members, New Members and Friends of Watchet Conservation Society, welcome to our 11th Newsletter. Since the last issue in April things have been very busy within the Committee. We are moving forward with all our projects, some have been harder than others to complete and of course, when dealing with Councils it all takes a little longer ! So many people have offered help in so many ways, both with the Tidal Pool, and the Pebble Garden in Esplanade Lane, thank you so very much. Also as an organisation we have been able to give advice to Annie and her husband who will soon be moving into Swain Street, and have welcomed them to Watchet! We will be at the Carnival Fete in the afternoon of July 25th, so please come to our stand for a glass of wine and update. We are also having a stand at the Music Festival on August 28th & 29th, by which time we hope, or should I say 'we will be ready' to have a Great Fun Day on the Tidal Pool on Bank Holiday Monday 30th. Please come to our next meeting on **27th July** when the speaker will be **Nigel Hester**, Countryside Manager for National Trust Holnicote and we hope to see you there.....*Molly*



27th July at 7.30 pm, Methodist School Room, Watchet. "Conservation in a changing climate"

Nigel will speak about the impact of climate change on our coastal region through rising sea levels changing not only our landscape, but the biodiversity of our local wildlife including bats, butterflies, birds, flowers, and farmed animals.



Holnicote Estate spans the heather moorland of Dunkery Beacon, the ancient woodlands of Horner & Dunkery, a National Nature Reserve, Bossington Beach & Salt Marsh in Porlock Bay, picturesque medieval to 19th century villages like Selworthy, and working farms, all interspersed with dramatic cliffs and scenery.

Please come along to this fascinating talk and help encourage other too! All are welcome!

Tidal Pool West Beach - update 7th & 8th August

We have made excellent progress for cleaning the pool on Sat Aug 7th from ~ 6.30 am within suitable tides (+Sun 8th if needed to complete). A local resident and builder has volunteered a digger and manpower for moving the larger debris, with the marina & boat owners helping with power washing. Only qualified operators can operate the powered equipment, but we will then need a number of volunteers to help with manual clearing using shovels and brushes.



Please can you contact **John Irvén (Tel 01984 631083; Mobile 07928258436; email john.irven@btinternet.com)** if you are able to help (& whether you could provide shovels, brooms & wheelbarrows etc), as this needs close co-ordination to ensure we follow health & safety requirements.

Pebble pavement and garden projects

Eric Robinson has been continuing to renovate pavement mosaic areas within the town, the most recent being that outside Pier Cottage, Market Street, owned by Jerry & Anthea Lowe who run 'Pebbles Bistro'. An article appeared in the West Somerset Free Press of 7 May, with this photo showing Jerry and the new pavement.



Eric used river pebbles set into a bed of gravel and clay, as traditionally used in the 19th C. The next scheduled work is to nearby Severn House.

Albert's

As we are sure you will all know, and regret, Albert who owned and ran his store in Swain Stree, died recently after a prolonged illness. We had been discussing with him the renovation of the worn flooring in his shop entrance, and Eric took the opportunity to consult with Sheila.



She warmly supported the idea of producing a new threshold, designed specifically as a memorial to Albert, and we have identified a local craftsman who will produce a final design using stone provided by a generous donor.

Pebble garden, Esplanade Lane - update

Pending resolution of approvals & terms with West Somerset District Council of our plans to refurbish the garden, we decided at our open meeting on 25th May to dig over the ground and plant summer bedding plants to make the area more attractive in the interim. Committee member Mike Whetlor did sterling work to clear and replant the garden before departing on vacation, for which we are very grateful, and with plants donated by Loretta Whetlor and John Irven the area is now looking much better!



We also have support from the bookshop, tourist office and nearby residents to keep this watered, together with refurbishing the outside.

New Projects



We are grateful to local historian David Banks for identifying that the original grinding stone from Stoa's Mill currently sits, rather untidily, within Anchor Street car park, and its partner top stone acts as a base to the blue anchor welcoming visitors to Watchet at the top of Brendon Road. Whether we can ever bring them together may be a matter for ongoing debate, but in the meantime we plan to tidy up and plant the area in Anchor Street and better display and sign this example of our local industrial heritage.

May 25th Meeting – our apologies

Our scheduled speaker, Dr John Crothers, was due to talk about the Severn Barrage, but he unfortunately suffered a serious injury, then hospitalisation just before the talk. At very short notice we were able to secure Dr Robert Kirby to speak in his stead, but the fates were against us when he similarly required hospitalisation, just a day before the meeting! We wish both a speedy recovery, and will hope to have a talk on this topic in January 2011. As it was too late to cancel the meeting, we tried contacting as many attendees as possible to alert them, and of our intention to continue by holding a general open members meeting in its place. This allowed us to have a very enjoyable discussion and update about the projects on which we are working with everyone who still came along. We hope you will understand the difficulties we faced, and will attend our next meeting and talk.

Update from Membership Secretary

Since the AGM in January, we have trebled our memberships, which now stand at 74, and with family groups means that we have more than 100 members.



Anyone wishing to join or renew, please send your subscription cheques to John Irven, 3 St Decuman's Heights, Watchet TA23 0FL. Renewal forms will be available at next meeting, or on <http://www.watchetconservationsociety.co.uk/about.html>

Quiz

There are three photographs shown, some easier, some getting harder. Just try answering the questions. There will be a prize awarded for the best answers, to be presented at our next meeting and talk on 27th July, so do come along!



Photo1



Photo 2



Photo 3

Question 1 - where is the old foundry situated, which produced goods like in photo 2 ?

Question 2 – where locally can you see these drain covers today, who can spot the most, and where are they

Question3 – these signs have been springing up around Watchet – what do they signify?

Answers to John Irven, 3 St Decuman's Heights, Watchet TA23 0F email john.irven@btinternet.com

Future dates for your diary

- July 25th WCS stand at Watchet Carnival, Memorial ground all afternoon.
- July 27th Methodist Hall – talk by Nigel Hester ‘Conservation in a changing climate’ 7.30pm.
- August 2nd Committee meeting 7.30 pm
- August 7th/8th Clearing West Beach Pool from 06.30
- August 28/29th WCs stand at Watchet Music Festival each afternoon
- August 30th Bank Holiday fun day at tidal pool
- Sept 28th Methodist Hall 7.30 pm– talk by William Wake ‘Sometimes you have to stamp your foot’
Talking on the challenges of Conservation at Dunster Castle
- Nov 23rd Methodist Hall – talk by Robert Fowke – ‘The real ancient mariner’ 7.30pm
- Talk organised by Neville Gosling. Make it a date in your diary, and hear Robert talk about his researches that led to his book ‘The Real Ancient Mariner’ where he reveals who Coleridge really based his poem upon!

We would love to see you participating in upcoming activities of the society, as members, volunteers to help on projects, or just coming along to interesting talks!



www.watchetconservationsociety.co.uk

Chair Molly Quint - 01984 632592

Treasurer and Membership Secretary - John Irven - 01984 631083

Secretary - Christopher Danby - 01984 631232

Committee: Neville Gosling, Eric Robinson, Tim Taylor, Sam Westmacott, Mike Whetlor